

§ 143-345.21. State employee suggestion program.

(a) A State employee or team of State employees may receive an incentive bonus or bonuses in reward for suggestions or innovations resulting in monetary savings to the State, increased revenues to the State, or improved quality of services delivered to the public.

(b) Repealed by Session Laws 2001-424, s. 7.2(c), effective July 1, 2001.

(b1) The amount of savings generated by suggestions and innovations shall be determined after a 12-month period of implementation or, if applicable, no more than 90 days after the one-time savings is determined or the suggestion is approved. No suggestion payments shall be paid prior to the expiration of 12 months, or 90 days after the final one-time savings is determined or the suggestion is approved, and payment may be delayed further as reasonably required to ensure that a complete cost implementation cycle is evaluated fully.

(c) Any savings are to be calculated using the actual expenditures for a program, activity, or service compared to the budgeted amount for the same, if an amount has been budgeted for the program, activity, or service. The savings calculation shall include the amount of any reversions in excess of the baseline reversion. Any savings realized through NC-Thinks shall be weighed against continued service to the public and the assurance that there is not a negative impact on State programs.

(d) If a suggestion or innovation affects a program, activity, or service for which no separate budgeted amount has been made, the State Coordinator, in conjunction with the agency evaluator or agency fiscal officer, or both for that suggestion or innovation, shall determine the budgetary impact of the suggestion or innovation.

(e) No monetary award or leave can be awarded through NC-Thinks where specifically disallowed by the terms of the funding source.

(f) The Office of State Human Resources shall establish the NC-Thinks reserve fund in which all savings for all suggestions shall be deposited as earned. Each participating agency shall be responsible for transferring savings to the NC-Thinks reserve fund. The funds may be encumbered as needed to ensure payment to the General Fund, to the suggester, and for distribution as required by G.S. 143-345.22. The Office of State Human Resources shall provide the NC-Thinks reserve fund summary at the close of each fiscal year to the Office of State Budget and Management and to the participating agencies. The Office of State Budget and Management shall have oversight responsibility for ensuring that the required reversions and transfers are made to the General Fund, and that all encumbered funds are accounted for and paid as required by law.

(g) No distribution of suggester awards shall occur until reversion requirements to the General Fund are met and distributions as required by G.S. 143-345.22 are satisfied and verified by the Office of State Budget and Management. When all of the requirements of G.S. 143-345.22 are fulfilled, the Department of Administration shall transfer to the suggester's agency funds required to award the suggester. The suggester's agency shall make the suggestion award and ensure that all taxes and withholding requirements are met.

(h) Implementation costs may be prorated over a maximum of three years for suggestions or innovations that are capital intensive, involve leading-edge technology, or involve unconventional processes that require longer than 12 months for implementation. The amount of the average annual savings minus the average annual implementation cost shall be used as the basis for the agency to recommend a suggester award. The State Suggestion Review Committee shall consult the Office of State Budget and Management to make the final award determination in these cases.

(i) There is established in the Office of State Human Resources a nonreverting fund to be administered by the Office of State Human Resources for the training and education of permanent State employees to address specific mission critical needs and objectives. Funds

shall be credited from NC-Thinks to the fund as provided by this Article. (1997-513, s. 2; 1998-181, s. 5; 2001-424, s. 7.2(c); 2010-97, s. 11; 2011-224, s. 1; 2013-382, s. 9.1(c).)